

**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF WESTMINSTER, MARYLAND**

**Mayor and Common Council Meeting of January 23, 2017**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**Council Members Present:** Council President Wack, Councilman Chiavacci, Councilwoman Albert, Councilwoman Becker, Councilman Pecoraro, and Mayor Utz **Absent:** None.

**Staff Present:** Director of Recreation and Park Gruber, City Clerk Visocsy, City Attorney Levan, Director of Finance and Administrative Services Palmer, City Administrator Matthews, and Manager of Human Resources Childs.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Councilman Chiavacci moved, seconded by Councilman Pecoraro, to approve the Mayor and Common Council Meeting Minutes of January 9, 2017.

**VOTE**

**AYES:** Council President Wack, Councilman Chiavacci, Councilwoman Albert, Councilwoman Becker, and Councilman Pecoraro.

**NAYS:** None.

MOTION Passed Unanimously 5-0.

Councilwoman Becker moved, seconded by Councilman Chiavacci, to approve the minutes of the Executive Session of January 9, 2017.

**VOTE**

**AYES:** Council President Wack, Councilman Chiavacci, Councilwoman Albert, Councilwoman Becker, and Councilman Pecoraro.

**NAYS:** None.

MOTION Passed Unanimously 5-0.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

President Wack requested a motion to approve the consent calendar that consisted of the approval of December 2016 Departmental Operating Reports and UPSD Agreement Renewal with Town Mall. President Wack noted that the Façade easement, Agreement A-1099, for the City Mural at Locust Lane City Park had been removed from the Agenda.

Councilman Chiavacci moved, seconded by Councilman Pecoraro, to approve the Consent Calendar, as recommended.

**VOTE**

**AYES:** Council President Wack, Councilman Chiavacci, Councilwoman Albert, Councilwoman Becker, and Councilman Pecoraro.

**NAYS:** None.

MOTION Passed Unanimously 5-0.

**REPORT FROM THE MAYOR**

Mayor Utz reported that Carroll County had responded to the Annexations that were submitted for recording.

## **COUNCIL COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION**

President Wack requested a motion to approve his resignation as Council President. Councilman Pecoraro moved, seconded by Councilman Chiavacci, to move to suspend the rules for immediate election for President of the Council.

### **VOTE**

**AYES:** Council President Wack, Councilman Chiavacci, Councilwoman Albert, Councilwoman Becker, and Councilman Pecoraro.

**NAYS:** None.

MOTION Passed Unanimously 5-0.

Councilman Pecoraro moved, seconded by Councilwoman Becker, to elect Suzanne Albert as Common Council President.

President Wack commented that he was honored to have Councilwoman Albert serve as the Council President.

### **VOTE**

**AYES:** Council President Wack, Councilman Chiavacci, Councilwoman Albert, Councilwoman Becker, and Councilman Pecoraro.

**NAYS:** None.

MOTION Passed Unanimously 5-0.

Councilman Pecoraro moved, seconded by Councilman Chiavacci, to move to suspend the rules for immediate election of the Council President Pro Tempore.

### **VOTE**

**AYES:** Council President Albert, Councilman Chiavacci, Councilman Wack, Councilwoman Becker, and Councilman Pecoraro.

**NAYS:** None.

MOTION Passed Unanimously 5-0.

Councilman Pecoraro moved, seconded by Councilman Chiavacci, to elect Dr. Robert Wack to be Council President Pro Tempore.

### **VOTE**

**AYES:** Council President Albert, Councilman Chiavacci, Councilman Wack, Councilwoman Becker, and Councilman Pecoraro.

**NAYS:** None.

MOTION Passed Unanimously 5-0.

Councilman Chiavacci congratulated Ms. Albert for being elected as the first female Common Council President. President Albert thanked Council for the opportunity.

## **ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS**

Ms. Palmer recommended adoption of Ordinance No. 874, amending the adopted budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017 as discussed during the Council meeting on January 9, 2017.

Councilman Chiavacci moved, seconded by Councilman Wack, to approve Ordinance No. 874 – An Ordinance amending the adopted budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017, as recommended.

## **VOTE**

**AYES:** Council President Albert, Councilman Chiavacci, Councilman Wack, Councilwoman Becker, and Councilman Pecoraro.

**NAYS:** None.

MOTION Passed Unanimously 5-0.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Ms. Matthews stated that the report regarding the use of Winters Street for a bike lane is a follow up from the Mayor and Common Council meeting on November 28, 2016; at that meeting, Councilman Wack inquired whether Winters Street could accommodate a dedicated bike lane. Former Interim City Administrator Deutsch met with Mr. Glass, Chief Spaulding, Mr. Mackey and Ms. Gruber on December 20, 2016 to discuss this matter.

Ms. Gruber informed the Mayor and Common Council that staff assessed Winters Street at the beginning of East Main Street and Manchester Avenue to the terminus at the west end of Pennsylvania Avenue. It was noted that several sections of Winters Street were designated as one way; other challenges included two way traffic at the entrances and exits of parking lots. Additionally, there are areas of Winters Street where the road is too narrow for two way traffic to safely pass. Winters Street is also a service road for businesses and residents along Main Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, which could potentially be unsavory and unsafe for cyclists.

The possibility of using Green Street for a potential bicycle lane was also introduced and discussed during December 20, 2016 staff meeting. It was determined that Green Street would not be a suitable option for a bike lane due to the abundance of on-street parking.

In conclusion, staff does not believe that Winters Street is appropriate for the development of a bike lane through downtown Westminster. Staff believes that the development of bikeways between Carroll County's historic downtown would be a more advantageous endeavor. Ms. Gruber stated that, if Mayor and Common Council were supportive of the recommendation, staff would initiate the outreach efforts with other towns to explore the viability and feasibility of creating bikeways between Carroll County's historic downtowns.

Councilman Wack reiterated that he would like to see a way for local bicyclists to get into downtown safely with their families without needing to park further away from their destinations. Additionally, he would like the City to reexamine and determine if this would add enough value to the City for the amount of invested time that would be needed to implement this project. Ms. Gruber replied that staff will continue to evaluate options.

Councilman Chiavacci shared his experience as a business owner with a warehouse on Winters Street. When deliveries are being made, there is not enough room for the truck making the delivery. He added that there are other businesses in the same circumstances. Councilman Pecoraro suggested that the City look at other communities that have bike lanes. Councilman Chiavacci and Councilman Pecoraro agreed that Willis Street should be considered.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Lucas Matesa and Matt Stangroom of CohnReznick presented the Fiscal Year 2016 Audited Financial Reports to Mayor and Common Council.

Councilman Chiavacci inquired if the IT risk assessment was related to IT infrastructure for the entire City. Mr. Matesa replied that the IT risk assessment focused on the impact of the City's IT infrastructure as it relates to financial reporting.

Councilman Wack inquired if Mr. Matesa and Mr. Stangroom had a recommendation where the City of Westminster should be regarding the debt ratio. Mr. Matesa replied that he would follow up with the City to provide an accurate answer. Councilman Chiavacci inquired if CohnReznick found the City's bad debt to be

reasonable. Mr. Matesa replied that the firm refers to it as management assessment, which relates to a reserve for potential bad debts and found what the City has in place to be adequate. Ms. Palmer commented that the City has virtually no bad debt due to water shut offs and property tax sales for liens that are put onto properties.

President Albert requested a motion to hold an Executive Session immediately following the regular meeting to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice.

Councilman Chiavacci moved, seconded by Councilman Wack, to hold an Executive Session immediately following the regular meeting, as recommended.

### **VOTE**

**AYES:** Council President Albert, Councilman Chiavacci, Councilman Wack, Councilwoman Becker, and Councilman Pecoraro.

**NAYS:** None.

MOTION Passed Unanimously 5-0.

### **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

Mr. Cumberland congratulated Ms. Albert on becoming Common Council President. He added that the Westminster Fire Department will continue to protect and serve the community.

Ms. Childs reported that there were employee trainings taking place that include CRASE training for new employees and a LGIT defensive driving course. She also reported that the Public Works Department will be doing training for CPR, AED, Bloodborne pathogens, and First Aid.

Ms. Gruber reported that the second annual social media photo contest for “Show Some Love Westminster” will be underway soon. She shared that the Recreation and Parks Facebook page currently has 4,000 likes. Ms. Gruber then reported that there is a 700 runner cap for the Celtic Canter and the City is currently less than 20 runners away from meeting that cap. The Irish Celebration and the Celtic Canter will be held on March 11. Additionally, tickets are on sale for the Wine Stroll on April 2.

Ms. Palmer followed up on the report given by CohnRezinick. She shared that the IT assessment was completed last year for the first time. The findings noted in the audit were from last year and reflect items that still needed to be corrected as of June 30, 2016, but have since been completed. Ms. Palmer then shared that the Wakefield Valley land donation is half of the \$10M increase for the net assets. The City is required to book the property at market rates. The remaining half of the \$10M is from the Sewer Fund due to the City bringing in more revenue than expense due to the anticipation of the ENR project. The County will be responsible for \$12M of that project. Additionally, while the City is constructing the Fiber project, it is currently paying interest only for the loan.

Ms. Matthews reported on behalf of Chief Spaulding that the Westminster Police Department had been working to patrol the areas where auto theft had occurred. She also shared that the budget survey had been sent out to Mayor and Council.

### **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Christina Dougherty, 2456 Tyrone Road, shared her concerns regarding the Rental License Program. Councilman Chiavacci and Mayor Utz shared that the Rental License Program was in the process of being reevaluated at this time. Ms. Matthews shared that she would be in contact with Ms. Dougherty to resolve her concerns. Robert Dougherty also expressed his frustrations regarding the program and reiterated that they would like some clarification.

Lyndi McNulty, 195 W. Main Street, shared her experience in the Rental License Program. She then shared her concerns regarding another break in of her garage and vehicles.

Ed Cramer, 371 Winged Foot Drive, complimented the City for taking care of an overhanging tree limb.

**ADJOURNMENT**

President Albert adjourned the meeting at 8:08 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shannon Visocsy

Full audio version is available on [www.westminstermd.gov](http://www.westminstermd.gov).